

REPLY

TO THE REVEREND DR. CAHILL

OF THE

EUCCHARIST.

BY

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DEARBORN, ILL.

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REPLY

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FUGIO ALIST

The Church of St. Mary's, which is situated in the heart of the city, is a most interesting and beautiful building. It was founded in the year 1600, and has since that time been a place of worship for the faithful. The church is a fine example of the architecture of the period, and its interior is adorned with many beautiful works of art. The organ is particularly fine, and the choir is well trained. The services are conducted with great solemnity and devotion, and the people are always welcome to attend. The church is a great blessing to the community, and its influence is felt in all parts of the city. It is a place where the faithful can find comfort and solace, and where they can learn the lessons of the faith. The church is a true treasure, and it is a privilege to be a part of it. We hope that all who visit the church will be inspired by its beauty and its history, and that they will find in it a source of strength and comfort. The church is a great blessing to the community, and its influence is felt in all parts of the city. It is a place where the faithful can find comfort and solace, and where they can learn the lessons of the faith. The church is a true treasure, and it is a privilege to be a part of it.

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REPLY TO DR. CAHILL

ON THE

EUCHARIST.

"La Sainte Messe n'est autre chose que le sacrifice de la Redemption humaine, que le Divine Sauveur Jesus Christ represente, renouvelle, et continue à l'autel, sous les apparences Eucharistiques, par le ministere du prêtre." "La messe est le magnifique abregé de la Redemption." Such are the opening clauses of a well known "guide to the Mass" now before me, and entitled, "Christianisme en action, dans la Messe;" and, "methode populaire, pour bien assister a la Sainte Messe." It is beautifully printed, and adorned with upwards of one hundred engravings, many of them very unbecoming, but all intended to illustrate the history of redemption as exhibited in scripture. The work is sanctioned by the imprimatur of the Archbishop of Toulouse, and is in high esteem among the habitants of Lower Canada. It is interesting to Protestants as indicating what Popery really is as regards the Mass and the Eucharist. Dr. Cahill in the opening of his printed works (p. 9,) expresses himself nearly in the same terms. "The Catholic church has now a sacrifice which is a perfect

propitiation for sin, an offering suited to all the conditions of divine worship, and a gift to present to the Throne of Mercy worthy the acceptance of God."

In treating of the errors of the Church of Rome on the subject of the Lord's Supper, we have this advantage, that not a doubt exists in any quarter as to what is, in this instance, really and truly the doctrine of the Romish Church. There may be differences of opinion as to the consequences which we draw or which are supposed to follow from the doctrine, but there are none whatever in regard to the solid and substantial facts of the case. The Council of Trent long ago spoke out with perfect clearness when she said that "by the consecration of the bread and wine there is effected a conversion of the whole substance of the bread into the substance of the body of Christ our Lord, and of the whole substance of the wine into the substance of his blood.; which conversion is fitly and properly termed by the Holy Catholic Church, transubstantiation." † And again, "If any one shall deny that in the most holy sacrament of the Eucharist, there are contained truly, really, and substantially, the body and the blood, together with *the soul and divinity* of our Lord Jesus Christ, and therefore *the whole Christ*; or say that he is in it only as a sign or figure, or by his influence, *let him be accursed*. If any one shall deny that in the adorable sacrament of the Eucharist, a separation being made, the whole Christ is contained in each element or species, in the separate parts of each element or species, *let him be accursed*." ‡ "By what means," asks the Douay Catechism, "is that which was before bread changed into the body of Christ, and that which was wine changed into the blood of Christ? Ans.—By the divine

† Council of Trent, Sess. xiii., c. 4.

‡ Ibid., c. 8.

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power, which as easily changes one substance into another as he made the world out of nothing, and works the miraculous effect, which the Catholic Church calls transubstantiation, by the ministry of the priest; in the same manner as when, by Moses, the rivers were changed into blood, and water into wine by our Saviour Christ."

Protestants are sometimes inclined to think that this is a harmless speculation—an innocent absurdity; and some Roman Catholic writers are not unfond of glossing it over as one of the smaller points, on which Christians, who are agreed on the substance of the faith, may conscientiously differ. The Popish Church herself takes a very different view of the matter. Transubstantiation has been well described as "*the burning article*" of the Church of Rome; and the merest child who has looked into the ordinary martyrologies of persecuting times, can tell you, that the "denial of the real presence," as it was termed, constituted the heinous crime which multitudes of the most pious and holy men and women of the period were doomed to expiate in the flames. And need we remind the reader, that till within these very few years, a declaration *against* the doctrine, formed the *test* by which a senator, who might be suspected of Popery or of Popish leanings, was permitted to take his seat in the Parliament of Great Britain? A man who denies transubstantiation virtually renounces Popery, and would be distinctly held by the Church as a heretic, on whom her anathemas must fall.

The connection of this doctrine, also, with that of the sacrifice of the mass, marks its great practical importance. If there be no change whatever on the sacramental elements, there can be no real presentation of Christ's body as a sacrificial oblation; and the sacrifice of the mass falls by necessary

consequence to the ground. If, on the other hand, there be a real and literal transformation of the elements into the "body and soul," together with "the divinity" of our Lord Jesus Christ, the offering of the mass follows of course, in as much as this constitutes *the reason* assigned for the singular transformation. Now, it is surely unnecessary to inform Protestants of ordinary education, that to hold the doctrine of the mass, and, at the same time, that of the one spotless and all-sufficient sacrifice of the Redeemer on the cross, is absolutely impossible. The one is incompatible with the other. The sacrifice of Christ, once offered upon the cross, was a full and perfect propitiation for the sins of men, and therefore ought not, because it needs not, to be repeated. The inspired Author of the Epistle to the Hebrews argues the superiority of the Gospel over the Law in this special respect, that the expiatory sacrifice of the Gospel was offered once for all, whereas the sacrifices of the law were regularly repeated. Christ says he, "needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifices, first, for his own sins, and then for the people's, this he did once, when he offered up himself." "Once in the end of the world hath he appeared to take away sin by the sacrifice of himself, and as it is appointed unto all men once to die, and after this the judgment, so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many." "By the will of God we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus once for all." "This man," this person, "after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, forever sat down on the right hand of God: for by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified." † If the doctrine of the one atonement is of unspeakable moment in that scheme of grace which constitutes the only religion that is suited to man as a fallen creature, and if the

† Hebrews, vii. 27; ix. 26; x. 10, 12, 14.

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daily repetition of this sacrificial oblation is at utter variance with simplicity of dependance on the finished work of the Redeemer, of what importance is it to overthrow the foundation on which the Romish system of error on this point is reared? We do so when we show that the ordinance of the supper is a sign or symbol, merely, and not a *repetition* of the sacrifice of Christ,—that his real body is not there,—that his soul does not animate the wafer; and that his divinity is not inclosed in, or covered over by that “which perisheth with the using.”

I. Let us consider the *history* of the ordinance of our Lord's supper, that we may ascertain whether or not it gives any countenance to the peculiar dogmas of the Church of Rome, on the subject.

If we are entitled to expect clear and express information respecting the nature and design of any positive institution, it ought surely to be in the simple historical narrative of its primary appointment. We are not entitled to appeal to abstract principles, or to metaphysical reasonings, on such a subject; and the moral uses of the ordinance, however valuable in themselves, cannot, in the first instance, form a ground of evidence as to its real character and essence. In the case before us, we have not fewer than four distinct narratives of the original appointment of this service; and had there been any foundation for the doctrines of Rome regarding it, surely we might have expected to see them interwoven with the texture of these narratives. We can appeal with confidence to one and all of them, when we affirm, that in so far as the dogmas of transubstantiation and the sacrifice of the mass are concerned, there reigns throughout an unbroken silence.

It is of considerable moment to advert to the circumstances in which the twelve Apostles were placed when Jesus instituted the sacrament of the Supper. They had assembled, as they had been accustomed to do, to eat the Paschal Supper,

and their minds were necessarily prepossessed with the notions commonly held by the Jews regarding that sacred Festival. They revered it as a monumental or commemorative service. They viewed it in connection with the eventful history of the deliverance of their fathers. They beheld in it nothing beyond a symbolical representation of certain events in history. No essential change did they anticipate in the substance of the oblation; and though that oblation, like all others of the same nature, was sacrificial, its real virtue was believed to flow from its typical relationship. And yet the Jews, from the time of Ezra down to the latest period of their economy, were accustomed to say of the Passover, "This Passover is our Saviour and our refuge*." Not that they had the most distant idea of the lamb then visibly offered up as *transformed* into God, the "deliverer" of their fathers from bondage, or into the Messiah, whom they hailed as their "refuge" in the time of need. The Passover represented to them, and put them in mind of that salvation which God wrought for their fathers in Egypt, when, by the slaying of a lamb, and sprinkling the blood of it upon the lintels of their doors, their first-born were passed over and spared; while it likewise pre-figured the salvation of the Messias, "the Lamb of God, that was to take away the sins of the world." The language of our Lord, in establishing the New Testament Passover, was substantially the same with that to which they had been accustomed; and it could never enter their minds that there was any essential change in the one case more than in the other. Had our Lord designed to convey an idea so completely different from all their customary conceptions and associations in the matter, would he not have intimated that design in some mode or other? Doctrines so momentous as those of *actual creation*,

* Justin states this fact broadly in his Dialogue with Trypho, a Jew, p. 297, ed. 1639.

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and of *substitutionary sacrifice*, would not surely have been left to conjecture. This was not God's manner of dealing with his church, even in the infancy of its being; and we may rest assured that he would not act on such a principle at the glorious era of "grace and truth by Jesus Christ."

If any credit is to be given to a professed narrative of events, that narrative must be interpreted on the principles of grammatical analysis and common sense. Do the inspired relations of the last supper state that Jesus took his own body, then alive and in full health, and that he divided it into parts, and distributed these parts to the members of the company sitting around the table? or do they tell us that he drew the blood warm from his veins, and poured it into the cup before them, and then gave it to them to be drank off in his presence? No. They affirm no such singular dogma. They tell us that the blessed Saviour, while seated at the Paschal table, and conversing with his disciples, "took bread,"—just such bread as was before him—"and brake it, and gave it to his brethren and they did eat." They tell us that, in like manner, "he took the cup, and gave to them, saying, Drink ye all of it. All is simple and plain and easy to be apprehended. There is no change in the substance of the elements. There is no presentation to God of an "unbloody sacrifice." True, "he blessed," not the elements, but "his Father and their Father" who gave them, and who only could bless the use of them. St. Paul renders the words "he gave thanks," and as if to show that the import of both expressions is the same, the inspired evangelist who represents Christ as "blessing," when he took the bread, represents him in the same breath as "giving thanks" at the presentation of the cup. It is a very remarkable circumstance, also, that our blessed Lord, as if anticipating the corruptions

of a later age, and as if to remove even the shadow of a plea for such corruptions, closes the transactions of the Paschal eve with these impressive words: "I say unto you, I will not drink from henceforth of *this fruit of the vine*, until that day when I shall drink it with you new in the kingdom of my Father." He had just told them that this was his blood of the New Testament, and in the sequel of the very same address, he calls it "*this fruit of the vine*," thus removing, one would think, out of the way, the very possibility of mistake. The inspired Apostle Paul, in rehearsing the substance of the narrative, furnishes us with a similar caveat against error, when he thus concludes his statement: "As often as ye eat *this bread* and drink *this cup*, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come*." It is really and only "bread" that is eaten; it is really and truly a "cup of wine" that is drank. No transmutation of qualities is hinted at. No sacrificial oblation is offered. The deed is symbolical and commemorative; for they who eat and they who drink "do shew forth," in grateful remembrance, and in holy triumph, "the Lord's death till he come†."

But does not the blessed Saviour say, "This is my body;" "this is my blood?" And does not the same blessed Saviour say, on other occasions, "I am the door;" "I am the vine?" And does not Paul say, without the slightest suspicion of be-

* 1 Cor. xi. 26.

† The Rhemish version of Matthew xxvi. 26—30, is a very exact copy of the original.

"And whilst they were at supper, Jesus took bread, and blessed, and broke, and gave to his disciples, and said, 'Take ye, and eat; this is my body. And taking the chalice, he gave thanks, and gave to them, saying, 'Drink ye all of this. For this is my blood of the new testament, which shall be shed for many unto remission of sins. And I say to you, I will not drink from henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I shall drink it with you new in the kingdom of my Father.'" The reader may find it useful to compare this translation with that of the Protestant version.

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ing misunderstood, "All in Moses were baptised in the cloud and in the sea; and did all eat the same spiritual food; and all drank the same spiritual drink; and they drank of the spiritual rock that followed them, and the *rock was Christ?* †" It is well known that in the Hebrew, or Syro-Chaldaic, the language which our Lord must have used on this occasion, there is no word precisely answering to our English term, *signifies* or *represents*. At all events, even if such a word existed, it is quite obvious that it was never used in this connexion. And hence the frequency of the expression, *it is*, when the meaning obviously is, *it signifies or represents*. "The three branches are three days." "The seven beautiful kine and the seven full ears are seven years of plenty." § "And he said to me, Son of man, all these bones are the house of Israel." || No man is in danger of mistaking the meaning of such expressions, who allows ordinary sense and the usage of language to guide him. It is true that the Greek language has terms to express what we mean by *signify*, *denote*, *represent*; but it is well known to have been customary with the Apostles to write Greek according to the Hebrew idiom, or the Chaldaic, which was their vernacular tongue. Thus the Apostle John, in Revelations I. 20, uses the substantive verb in exactly the same sense, when he says: "The seven stars are the angels of the seven churches, and the seven candlesticks are the seven churches." "Through the Providence of God," says Dr. Adam Clarke, "we have complete versions of the Gospel in the Syriac language, and in them it is likely we have the precise words spoken by our Lord on this occasion. In Matthew xxvi. 26, 27, the words in the Syriac version are *honaw pagre*, this is my body; *honaw deme*, this is my blood,

† 1 Cor. x. 2, 3, 4. R. O. version.

§ Genesis xl 12; xli, 26.

|| Ezek. xxxvii. 11. R. O. vers.

of which forms of speech the Greek is a verbal translation.—Nor would any man, even in the present day, speaking in the same language, use, among the people to whom it was vernacular, other terms than the above, to express, this *represents* my body, and this *represents* my blood." †

Our Lord's language in the sixth chapter of John, where he speaks of "eating the flesh" and "drinking the blood of the son of man," has been often quoted by Roman Catholic writers in proof of the doctrine of transubstantiation. The utter worthlessness of any argument derived from such a source may be proved by a simple reference to the passage itself.—"He that eateth my flesh, and drinketh my blood, abideth in me and I in him. As the living Father hath sent me, and I live by the Father, so, he that eateth me, the same shall live by me. This is the bread that came down from heaven; not as your fathers did eat manna, and are dead; he that eateth of this bread shall live forever." † Jesus sometimes speaks of himself as "bread," and at other times as "flesh" and "blood." In both views his language is figurative, and when his carnally minded hearers showed their inclination to understand in a gross and material sense what was meant to have an exclusively spiritual signification, he thus explains the import of his statements: "It is the spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing. The words that I have spoken unto you are spirit and life." † There is no reference in the whole passage to the holy sacrament of the supper, which was not instituted for a considerable time after. Our Lord's design clearly is, to declare in figurative, yet very intelligible language, the necessity of our believing and relying on his sufferings and death as a divine propitiation. The recent miraculous feeding of

† Dr. Clarke on the Eucharist. p. 53.

† John, vi., 55—80.

‖ Ib. v. 64.

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several thousands of fainting followers is the key to the whole. The resemblance betwixt the figure, and that practical and appropriating faith which is the thing designed by it, may be traced in multiplied instances. This spiritual eating and drinking begins with hungering and thirsting—earnest and importunate longings after Christ. It implies also an application of Christ, and the benefits of his purchase, to ourselves.—Meat looked upon will not nourish us; but meat fed upon, and so made our own, and as it were, one with us and a part of ourselves. We must so accept of Christ as to appropriate him and the blessings of his salvation to ourselves. Moreover, the doctrine of Christ crucified, must be as meat and drink to us, most agreeable and refreshing. And then, faith implies the deriving of nourishment from Christ, and dependence upon him for the support of the spiritual life, and the strength, growth, and vigor, of the new man "created in Christ Jesus unto good works." To feed upon Christ or to live by him, is, to do all in his name, in union with him, and by virtue derived from him. Thus the Christian feeds daily on Christ, in his heart and soul, and proceeds in his walk and warfare with patient alacrity. He imbibes the spirit which breathed in the Redeemer himself when he said: "My meat is, to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work."†

The notion of Dr. Cahill (works p. 8-10) that the "bread and wine" brought forth by Melchisedek on occasion of Abraham's return from the toils of war, was the *type* or *symbol* of which the bread and wine used by the Redeemer at the first sacramental supper was the *reality*, is at variance with the ordinary ideas held by his church, that the elements in Melchisedek's case were sacrificial, and that this venerable "priest of the Most High God" presented "*the first mass*." In regard

† John IV. 34.

to both views, however, I would remark—first; that Melchisedek is expressly said to have acted as a “King” when in his liberality he brought forth the means of refreshment to the Patriarch; while as a “priest” “he blesses Abraham,” and the patriarch is nowhere said to have partaken of the bread and wine sacramentally as from priestly hands, but to have recognised his priestly character in another way altogether, namely, “in giving him tithes of all”: and secondly, that the supposed connexion of the history in the book of Genesis with that of the first passover of Christ is a pure fiction. Yea moreover, it must be plain, to every candid mind, that the idea of the Lord’s Supper being the *reality*, of what the bread and the wine in the patriarch’s case *symbolised*, is put down by the whole bearing of the evangelistic narration, which affixes to the supper of the Lord as at first administered, not a sacrificial, but a strictly *memorial* or *eucharistic* character. “This do in remembrance of me,” for “as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do *shew forth* the Lord’s death till he come.” It was not till the *ninth* century of the Christian era that the doctrine of the “real presence” was first promulgated, by Paschasius Radbertus, an obscure monk, and it led to a controversy which lasted for centuries; and not until the *fourth Lateran Council*, in 1215, was the monstrous dogma officially recognised by the Church. Are we to infer that during the lapse of more than a thousand years the real nature and design of the delightful ordinance of the supper were hid from the apprehension of the members of the family of Christ, for whom, exclusively, the “feast of love” was designed? At an early period, indeed, corruptions were blended with the simplicity of the Christian ritual; but we agree entirely in the remarks of a very noble defender of Protestant truth, removed, alas! prematurely as we think, from the Church militant to the Church

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triumphant above; "It is certain that during the first three centuries, there was no adoration of the host; no altar; and no proper sacrifice; and that of course the mass, the great idol of Popery, was utterly unknown." †

II. Having seen that the doctrine of transubstantiation derives no support from the inspired history of the ordinance of the supper, let us now try the doctrine at the bar of sense and of reason.

Beyond all question, the doctrine of transubstantiation stands opposed to the direct testimony of *four* out of the *five* senses with which our Creator has gifted us. These senses are the inlets of knowledge; and the knowledge which is communicated by these inlets is commonly considered as the most certain of all. To any statement of fact or opinion, then, it is a most fatal objection that it runs counter to the testimony of sense. All that we know of written revelation, of Christian doctrine, and of sacred ordinances, is ultimately derived from the testimony of sense; and if the eye deceives us perpetually in one instance, why may it not have deceived us in all? It will not help us out of the difficulty to plead that in the case before us there is a miracle. There is absolutely nothing of the kind. When water was turned into wine, fluidity remained, but the qualities of real wine were ascertained by the taste of the recipients. When a lame man was cured by a touch, he was no longer lame; "he leaped and walked." When a dead man was raised to life again, he truly lived, and performed all the functions of living men. Here there was a miracle done, and plain matter of fact proved that it had been done. But in transubstantiation there is an alleged change of substance, while all the qualities, and attributes, and accidents of the substance remain as before. There is an effect supposed to

† Historical Theology, by Principal Cunningham, vol. I. p. 205.

be produced, while there is absolutely not one evidence of the actual production of such an effect. A change is said to be effected on the bread, so as to transform it into the real body of Christ; but the bread still remains; for the only proofs we ever had that it really was bread, remain to prove that it is and must be bread still. An alteration is affirmed to have taken place on the substance of the wine, so as that there is no longer wine but blood, and *that* the real living blood of him who is Emmanuel, God with us; but yet the wine remains precisely as it was before; and the only evidences we had or could have that it ever was wine, remain to prove that it is and must be wine still. If this be a miracle, we say of it, that it is a miracle which any man at any time may perform, provided only he can collect effrontery enough to make the attempt, and provided also that he can find spectators complacent enough, and stupid enough, to believe that he has succeeded in making it.

Tried at the bar of human reason, transubstantiation must also be non-suited. Roman Catholics are not indisposed to fraternise with Socinians, when they attempt to draw a parallel betwixt belief in the doctrine of the Trinity, and belief in the dogma of transubstantiation. The attempt is as vain as it is impious. The doctrine of the Trinity does not run counter to the evidence of sense in a single instance; the doctrine of transubstantiation is directly opposed to four senses out of five. The one is confessedly *above* reason, and therefore cannot be proved to be *contrary* to it; the other is perfectly level to human apprehension, and may be easily proved to be contrary to the plainest dictates of the human understanding. If it is an axiom in mathematics, that it is impossible for the same thing to be and not to be at the same time, then may we, with perfect certainty of conviction, say that the same thing

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cannot be simple bread and real flesh at one and the same time. There is no process of argumentation necessary here. The thing is level, if anything is, to the capacity of man ; and if man is disqualified for judging here, where or when shall his capacity and his title, to judge *at all*, be sustained ? That there may be in the manner of the divine existence, a distinction to which we can find nothing analogous in human beings, is certainly possible ; or at any rate, our confessed ignorance of the subject in question, puts it beyond our power to pronounce it absolutely impossible. We are not entitled to affirm of a proposition that it involves a clear and manifest contradiction, unless all the terms of the proposition are intelligible to us, and the whole subject is one that is level to our apprehensions. This is confessedly not the case either with respect to the doctrine of the trinity of persons in the godhead, or that of the hypostatical union of divinity and humanity in the person of the mediator. The subject in both these instances is one which lies beyond the range of our limited apprehensions. In regard to transubstantiation, the matter of fact is directly the reverse. *There*, if anywhere, man is competent to judge, for the subject is one of reason and of sense : and a confessed incompetency *here* would, in effect, amount to a sentence of attainder upon the most thoroughly established and least contested rights of man's rational nature.

III. Let us now try the doctrine in question by the test of *direct and necessary consequences*.

In the first place, the doctrine of the Romish Church on the subject of our Lord's supper necessarily annihilates its sacramental character. "This do in remembrance," or as a memorial "of me," said our blessed Redeemer ; and the comment on his words, as given by the inspired apostle of the Gentiles, runs in

corresponding terms: "as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come." All the accompaniments of a sacramental act belong to it; and its due performance involves in it a solemn vow of consecration and obedience to the Lord. How different from this does the whole aspect of the ordinance appear, when encumbered with the additions superinduced by the Romish Church! There is no longer a deed of sacred remembrance; there is an act of direct creation. There are no longer symbols to assist our faith by the instrumentality of sense; there are actual realities, the body, the soul, and the divinity, of our blessed Redeemer. There is no simple commemoration of "the decease that was accomplished at Jerusalem;" there is an *acting over again* of the solemn scene, and a renewed presentation of the Redeemer's sacrifice "for the life of the world." You may call this by whatever name you please; one thing is certain, it cannot be called a sacramental memorial. It has been divested of its original and true sacramental character, and whatever may be its use, real or supposed, it is of no value whatever as a remembrance of Christ.

In the *second* place, the doctrine in question inflicts a fatal wound on the evidences of the glorious Gospel, and more particularly on the evidence of miracles.

The moment you maintain that your eye and your ear are perpetually engaged in a conspiracy to deceive, you annihilate all direct proof of any fact or doctrine from the evidence of miracles. On such a principle as that involved in transubstantiation, how am I to know that the lame man was really cured; that the blind man really received his sight; that Lazarus and the widow's son were really raised to life again? The Church of Rome tells me that what I see, and handle, and smell, and taste, as bread and nothing but bread, is something far diffe-

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rent; that the magic of the priest's words has been the ever-successful talisman by which it has been transformed into real flesh and blood; and how am I to be satisfied that the whole history of the birth, life and miracles of Christ, is not a merely scenic representation, such as this is? One of the disciples thought meet to ask, as the cure of his sceptical doubts, the evidence of sense. He thought of nothing higher, he thought of nothing else. "Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the print of the nails, and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe." † The condescending Saviour gratified him in his wish, and allowed him to test the reality of his resurrection by the proof of actual touch—the direct experiment of sense. But, according to the doctrine of transubstantiation, Thomas, and a greater than he were both labouring under a very grievous mistake. On another occasion soon after, Jesus stood in the midst of his disciples, and addressed them in the language of encouragement. "They were troubled and affrighted, and supposed they saw a spirit." Jesus kindly interposed to dissipate their fears, and to satisfy their doubts. And what is the test to which he brings the question of his own identity? On what does he make the whole matter of Christianity itself, as linked with his actual resurrection, to depend? It is on the plain and undisguised testimony of the senses. "Why are you troubled, and why do thoughts arise in your hearts? See my hands and feet that it is I myself. Handle and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as you see me to have." Having said this, "he shewed them his hands and feet." Some lingering suspicions yet remaining in their minds, he appeals to sense again, by taking food and eating in their presence.* Soon

† John, **xx.** 25.* Luke, **xxiv.** 36-44.

after he ascended visibly up into Heaven, and the credit of his *real ascension* depends entirely on the testimony of sense. We have thus, by words and by deeds, the solemn imprimatur of Him who is truth itself, to the reality of the evidence of sense. We have it given to the Church and to the world, just when he is on the eve of leaving both. We have it recorded, at the very close of those evangelical narratives which were written expressly for this end, that "ye may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing we may have life in his name.†" Can that doctrine be from God which is thus fatally at war with the evidences of his glorious Gospel? Shall we hold the dogma of transubstantiation to be a merely speculative error, or a mental hallucination? No; it wounds Christianity in its vitals; and it need not surprise us that Popery and Infidelity should be leagued in brotherhood.

In the *third* place, The doctrine of transubstantiation tends directly to atheism.

"The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth forth his handiwork." "The invisible things of God, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and godhead; so that they are without excuse." We appeal to the evidences of design in nature as palpable proofs of the existence of a great, original, designing mind; and we appeal to the continued existence, the order, and the regularly conducted movements of nature, in evidence of God's superintending agency. An inspired penman recognises the argument as sound, and pronounces those heathen philosophers inexcusable who resisted this evidence, and "worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator," and who, from the hardness

† John, xx. 31.

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of their hearts, and their love of sin, "did not like to retain God in their knowledge." On the theory of Romanism they had a very valid excuse. The testimony of sense is not to be relied on. All this goodly fabric of nature may be nothing more than a creation of the fancy. The supposed evidences of design may be all a deception. Man may be placed in such a position, as to be incapable of proving to his own mind, either his own existence or that of any other being besides himself. Certainty may give place to reckless scepticism; and the most exalted and best established verities of religion may bow their heads before the dreams of Pyrrho and Epicurus.

In the *fourth* and last place, the doctrine of transubstantiation, with its necessary concomitants, the sacrifice of the mass and extreme unction, necessarily invests fallible and erring men with a power that is unnatural and altogether unreasonable.

We do not say, as Roman Catholics aver, that the priest creates God; or that *he himself* is the sacrificatory oblation that takes away sin; or, that he literally opens and shuts the gates of paradise. But we do say, that he is made the *instrument* of doing all this; and we say farther, that the use or the abuse of this instrumentality depends entirely *on himself*. It is *through him* the poor trembling sinner must transact with his maker. If the priest is pleased to bless the elements of bread and wine, according to the prescribed form, the effect necessarily follows; an act of *creation* is performed by him just in the same sense as an act of healing was performed by an apostle when he looked on the sick man and perceiving that he had faith to be healed, said, and said with absolute certainty of result, "take up thy bed and walk." If the priest be pleased to offer up the "unbloody sacrifice," as it is called, and mass is duly performed, a substitutionary oblation is presented by his agency, and a renewal of Christ's one "spotless and perfect"

oblation, is, by the spell of words and the magic of forms, successfully effected. If the priest pleases to give the consecrated wafer to the dying man, his sins are supposed to be washed away, and a comfortable viaticum secured for the lengthened journey that is before him. On the other hand, if the priest shall not be pleased to do all this, either perhaps because he is not in a mood for it at the time, or because he has a secret dislike to the worshipping applicants, or perhaps because his selfish and mercenary inclinations have not been sufficiently gratified, then, what is the consequence? The act of creation is not performed. The sacrifice of the mass stands over for the time. The provision for eternity is not administered, and what then? Souls are lost; or at the very least are subject to woes all but interminable. There is here a palpable assumption, on the part of man, of powers and prerogatives which *do* belong, and which *can* belong, to God only. The charter which secures such tremendous immunities to any class of human beings would require to be clearly defined, and authentic beyond the possibility of a doubt. Indeed, the very claim to such a charter, advanced as it has been by the adherents of Popery and kindred institutions, has in all ages proved the most tremendous instrument of priestly domination; and the doctrines of which we are now speaking may be said to owe their existence, or at least their consolidation, to the growing wish on the part of the priests of Rome to aggrandize their power. From the *ninth* to the *thirteenth* century, the darkest portion of that dark age which for a thousand years settled over Europe, a feeble struggle was kept up betwixt the adherents of the Papacy on the one hand, and the slender remains of reason and common sense on the other; till at length, about the middle of the latter of these centuries, transubstantiation, with its wicked and soul-deluding accompaniments, gained

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their end, in the subjugation of Europe to the sovereign Pontiff of Rome. Up to the present day, Popery has retained a large portion of her spiritual supremacy by so strenuously holding fast these her irresponsible and undefinable claims; and it is just in proportion as she advances in her assumed dominion over the *souls* of men, that she paves the way for unhinging every free institution, and for binding the mass of a community in adamantine chains.

Do Protestants deny the doctrine of the "real presence?" By no means. We deny the dogma of a transmutation of substances while the accidents remain. We scout the notion of a talismanic charm in the words of a priest. We hold as a natural impossibility the presence of the same material vehicle in all places of the world at one and the same instant. We believe that "the heavens have received Christ" in his holy and glorified humanity, "until the times of the restitution of all things." We rely on the "one sacrifice" for sins which was offered "in the end of ages;" and we tremble for those who reject it, inasmuch as we believe that there "remaineth no more sacrifice for sins." We deny the notion of a *corporeal* presence on the part of the Redeemer; but we do not deny his "*real presence*." Yes; we delight to rehearse his soul-refreshing words of promise: "Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world." We believe, that in his divine nature, he is ever present in the assemblies of his saints, and peculiarly present with them at the communion table. We believe that the spirit of Christ is present also as the comforter, to imprint truth on the heart, to strengthen faith, and to fan the flame of devotion. We believe "in the communion of saints." "In the cup of blessing, which we bless," we do recognise "the communion of the blood of Christ;" and we believe and desire to feel, that all who "love our Lord Jesus in sin-

cerity," are "one body and one bread." Our earnest prayer is, "that God may send forth his light and his truth to guide us to his holy hill," that we may go unto him as "our exceeding joy." We desire that the ordinance of the supper may be blest to every participant, for strengthening faith and animating obedience; and we pray, that when the purposes of God's providence here with us are served, our exercises in the temple below may be exchanged for the higher and holier services of "our Father's house" above.
